



ST ANDREW'S THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE (SATC)

COURSE NAME: **MINISTERIAL ETHICS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

COURSE CODE: **MER300**

COURSE CREDIT: **3**

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course deals with a Minister's relationship with people with whom he/she must relate and work, and, appropriate attitudes in given situations. Changing clergy identity, roles, and responsibilities will be addressed in relation to a range of ethical issues faced in congregational life and ministry, including confidentiality, clergy misconduct, and collegiality with professional peers, and the ethics of preaching, counseling, and social witness.

Students will learn the unique moral role of ministers and the ethical responsibilities clergy should assume in their personal and professional lives. The lecturer will deal with family life, confidentiality, truth-telling, political involvement, working with committees, and relating to other church staff members.

AIM:

- To develop a theological framework for ethical pastoral conduct with attention to issues of power and professionalism and their limits..
- To critically appreciate one or more denominational codes of ethics for ministry.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students will be able to:

- Become familiar with professional ethics and, in particular, ethical issues within pastoral ministry.
- Gain knowledge of the cultural, social and ethical realities in which the church lives and responds both globally and locally.
- Develop the capacity to integrate the elements of Christian tradition in a theology and practice of ministry
- Act with moral sensitivity and in accord with professional ethics
- Advocate for compassion and justice in personal, congregational and community settings.
- Develop one's own ecclesiastical identity within an ecumenical ethos, identifying one's strengths and limits.
- Learn how to engage in on-going professional development.

COURSE CONTENT:

Theology and ethic of ministry.

Key themes, principles, and concerns included in a professional code of ethics in ministry.

Professional ethics in ministry .

Pastoral ethics from various authors through the eyes of Lebacqz, Trull ,Carter, Gula, Bush.

Critical and appreciative assessment of one's denomination code of professional conduct, including policies about clergy misconduct, counseling guidelines, mandatory reporting, confidentiality, etc.

Exploring the code's theology and ethic of ministry, including assumptions about ministry, leadership, power, and authority.

Guidance re, ethical integrity in ministry.



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Addressing lapses in ethics.

Understanding one's denomination's code about clergy as persons, and about their professional role.

Addressing strengths and weaknesses and omissions, in the guidance provided.

Correction of omissions in the guidance provided.

Suggested changes in code of ethics in ministry.

COURSE TEXTS:

1. Gula, R. M. (1996). *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*. New York: Paulist Press.
2. Halaas, M.D., & Wagstrom, G. (2004). *The right road: Life choices for clergy*. Minneapolis: Fortress.
3. Lebacqz, K. (1985). *Professional ethics: Power and paradox*. Nashville, TN. Abingdon.
4. Lebacqz, K., & Driskill, J. D. (2000). *Ethics and spiritual care: A Guide for pastors, chaplains, and spiritual directors*. Nashville, TN. Abingdon.
5. Trull, J. E. & Carter, J. E. (2004). *Ministerial ethics: Moral formation for church leaders*, (2nd ed.). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Lectures

Discussions

Student presentations

COURSE ASSESSMENT:

Class attendance and participation	10%
Case study presentation (In class)	10%
Case study and critical analysis paper	15%
Final Paper	65%
TOTAL	100%

Requirements:

- Completion of the assigned readings on schedule.
 - Constructive participation in class discussion, including active listening.
 - Facilitation of one or more class discussions, including written outline of material
1. **Consultation with clergy.** Consult with two clergy (one should not be in your denomination) about ethical issues in the practice of ministry.
 2. Be sure to address assumptions about ministry, leadership, power, authority, and so forth. What specific issues in professional ethics has the clergyperson struggled with in his or her ministry? How were these concerns dealt with, and what resources did the clergy call upon? Prepare summary notes with your reflections on these conversations (typed, doubled spaced, no more than 3-5 pages for each interview).
 3. **In-class presentation of case studies** (10%): Distribute copies of your one-page case study to the entire class membership, but give your critical analysis only to the instructor. Then lead a discussion of your case, and share your own learning and key insights at the conclusion.
 4. **Case study and critical analysis** (15%). Construct a 2-3 paragraph case study (no more than one-page maximum) describing an ethical issue or dilemma in the practice of ministry. Then in 3-5 pages (typed, doubled spaced) provide a written critical analysis of the case in which you draw on (a) your consultations with clergy, (b) readings from the course, and (c) insights from



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your own denomination's code of ministerial ethics. In your analysis, be sure to provide specific references to sources used.

5. **Final essay: A theology and ethics of ministry**, in which you develop your theological framework for ministerial ethics in relation to your own denomination's ethical code. 12-15 page paper (typed, doubled-spaced, footnoted, bibliography) (65%).